

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Last week, President George W. Bush signed into law legislation that allows the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to continue the practice of funding clean diesel projects as part of environmental enforcement settlements. This bill was introduced by Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) in partnership with Senator Tom Carper (D-DE), who introduced the same version in the United States Senate.

"I am very happy with the President's signature on this important piece of legislation," said Costa. "By continuing to allow diesel emission reduction projects as part of settlement agreements, we allow additional funding, from private corporations, for these types of projects - which help ensure that diesel vehicles emit fewer pollutants into our air, and that we see clearer skies in our future."

This successful program has funded more than \$60 million in diesel retrofit vehicles over the past few years. Under EPA's estimates, diesel retrofit projects have a 13-to-1 benefit-to-cost ratio, meaning the \$60 million has resulted in \$780 million in health benefits ranging from reduced asthma cases to fewer cardiopulmonary deaths.

In 2006, the EPA determined that if the agency received a specific appropriation for the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act's (DERA) grant program, the EPA could not allow diesel projects as part of an enforcement settlement. Costa's bill gives the EPA authority to continue to fund diesel retrofits through these settlements.